



MEDIA CONTACT: Laura Soll, Communications, 860-688-4499 or Cell 860-833-4466

**CALLING ALL CONNECTICUT VETERANS & ACTIVE PERSONNEL
TO MARCH IN 2016 CONNECTICUT VETERANS PARADE
*Sunday, November 6 Parade will be Largest in All of New England!***

HARTFORD, CONN., June 20, 2016 – It's never too early to start planning a statewide event to honor our nation's veterans. All Connecticut veterans and active military personnel are **invited to register now** to march in New England's largest veterans parade. The 17th annual Connecticut Veterans Parade will step off on **Sunday, November 6 at 12:30 p.m. near the Connecticut State Capitol Building in Hartford.** The procession will be held the Sunday before the federal observance of the holiday (Nov. 11) and two days before Election Day.

"With close to 3,000 marchers expected – almost all of them U.S. veterans – the Connecticut Veterans Parade is **one of the biggest salutes to veterans in the nation,**" explains Kristin Beth Ferris, the event's coordinator. "We encourage Connecticut residents of all ages to take a few hours to come to our state's Capital City, watch, cheer and say, 'Thank You' at this colorful meaningful event." Ferris notes that in 2015, for the first time in many years, a military aircraft flew over the parade. Organizers are hoping to feature a flyover again this year.

Eligible to march are Connecticut residents who are an active, retired or honorably discharged members of the U.S. Armed Forces including commissioned officers, warrant officers and enlisted personnel of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, National Guard or Reserves. Also included will be veterans groups, patriotic commissions, local municipalities, marching bands and drill teams from colleges, high and middle schools, and bagpipe & drum corps and fife & drum corps from across the state.

Special event features will include an **11:30 a.m. Wreath-Laying Ceremony** at the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Arch to remember all veterans, before the parade begins at 12:30 p.m. A **1:30 p.m. Moment of Silence** will be observed, as all marchers stop in-place to remember soldiers who died while serving their country, followed minute later by a tolling of church bells and singing of the National Anthem.

Parade volunteers will hand out American flags and "Thank You, Veterans" signs that spectators can hold high as the parade marches by. The parade's reviewing stand will be located on Main Street, across the street from the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, with loud speaker announcements about the units as they pass. An official 2016 collectible parade lapel pin will be sold with the proceeds helping to pay for parade operations. Also featured will be the winner of the parade's annual **Middle School Student Essay Contest** who will ride in a special vehicle in the parade and also read their winning pieces at the State Capitol in the days before the parade. The contest, which asks 6th, 7th and 8th graders to write 500 words or less about "*What It Means to be a Veteran*", is presented by The Navy League of the U.S. – Hartford Council and the Connecticut State Department of Veterans Affairs. The deadline for entries is September 30, 2016.

Parade Route: The Connecticut Veterans Parade will begin near the Connecticut State Capitol at the intersection of Buckingham St. and Washington St., and travel north up Trinity Street and through the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Arch. Marchers will then make a right onto Pearl Street, then make a right onto Main Street where it will pass a reviewing stand at the corner of Main & Gold Streets across from the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, and finally will make a right onto Capitol Avenue where it will end at Hudson Street. The event is expected to last for 2 to 2½ hours.

The 17th annual Connecticut Veterans Parade is organized by a nonprofit collaboration of veterans' groups, corporations, local municipalities, businesses and civic organizations. The Connecticut National Guard assists with the management of parade logistics, and the City of Hartford hosts the event.

Sponsorship dollars are needed help to pay for the operations of the parade. Sponsors can include

-MORE-

CALLING ALL VETERANS & ACTIVE PERSONNEL TO MARCH IN CONN. VETERANS PARADE-Pg. 2

corporations, organizations, and individual residents who wish to make a contribution to the effort. Financial contributions to support the parade can be made on-line at www.CTVeteransParade.org. Checks may be written to "Connecticut Veterans Fund" and mailed to:

Connecticut Veterans Fund
1245 Farmington Avenue #338
West Hartford, CT 06107

To register to march in the November 6, 2016 **Connecticut Veterans Parade** or **enter the Student Essay Contest**, visit www.CTVeteransParade.org or call the Parade Info Phone at 860-986-7254. **Facebook:** [Connecticut Veterans Parade](#), and **Twitter:** [@CTVetsParade](#)

-END-